Perception™

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Improve your visual perceptual skills with Perception, a truly unique educational game for all ages.

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The Software Guild

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

Apple® II with Applesoft, II+, IIe, or Franklin Ace™ 1000
48K • DOS 3.3 • One Disk Drive
Paddle Controllers

PACKAGE CONTENTS

Perception Disk
Instruction Booklet
Warranty Card

OVERVIEW

Tired of chasing aliens around the galaxy? If so, Perception is for you. This refreshing program consists of seven different challenges, each designed to help you improve your visual perceptual skills. You'll be amazed at how difficult seemingly simple tasks, like comparing shapes and sizes, can be.

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I. Introduction

WHAT IS PERCEPTION

Those of us with healthy vision and perception tend to take these important qualities for granted. Yet, when we observe someone who truly excels in these, we often find ourselves awed. Perception is a unique program (actually a package of seven different programs) designed to help improve perceptual skills. It is not just a game or an educational program, but rather a combination of both in an enjoyable and challenging exercise.

This manual gives a description of each game and explains how to run the program. We suggest you read the manual before playing, to get the feel for each game.

FEATURES

Perception is designed to be easy to use, yet it still allows you maximum flexibility to control the difficulty of each program. It includes the following features:

- interactive menus giving clear and easy access to all programs on the disk
- complete user control over a variety of difficulty settings in each program
- uppercase and lowercase screen text for maximum legibility
- unique scoreboard routines which provide immediate feedback, and which maintain a cumulative "progress report" throughout each session of play
- detailed written instructions which accurately and clearly describe all available features
- appropriately timed instructions on the screen covering all basic operations

GETTING STARTED

To get started with Perception simply follow these steps. (This is called "booting.")

1. Turn off the computer to clear the memory. Turn on the monitor.
2. Open the disk drive door by pulling out and up on its bottom edge. Slip the program disk into drive #1 with the labeled edge being the last to enter the drive.
3. When the disk is entirely in the drive, close the drive door.
4. Turn the power switch to the on position. You will hear a "beep" from the computer, and the "in-use" light on the disk drive will come on. This means that the program is loading.

You will now see the Softsmith logo and Perception title appear on the screen. Then you will be brought to the main selection menu. If this doesn't happen, please try turning your computer off briefly, and then on again.

IMPORTANT TIPS

Follow these tips to minimize problems in running this and many other programs on your microcomputer.

Do not open the disk drive door while the "in-use" light is on. This may damage your disk and render it unusable.

Do not press <CTRL-C> while the "in-use" light is on. Results are unpredictable and damage to your program may result.

Do not press <BREAK> while the program is running.

Do not try to make a copy of this disk. If during normal use something goes wrong with your disk, please refer to the Troubleshooting section of this manual.

Handle your disks carefully and hold them with your fingers on the labeled edge. Always keep them in their special sleeves while not in use.

WARRANTY CARD

Please take a moment to fill out and mail the enclosed Warranty Card. By having your name on file we will be able to provide the best possible customer service, including information on program updates and replacement of damaged disks.

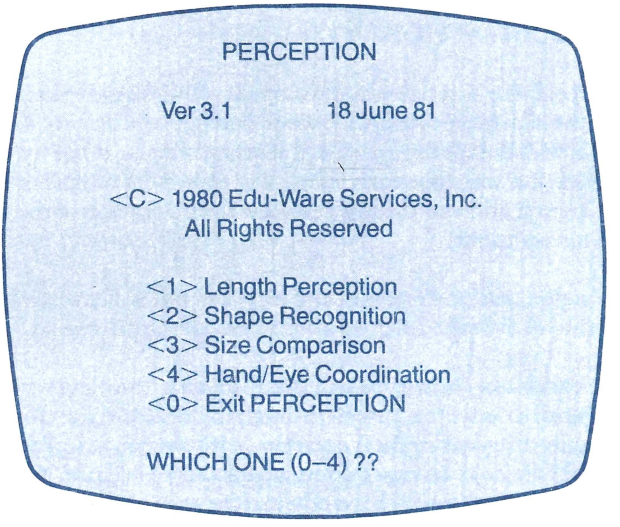
The objective of The Software Guild is to provide the best software available. A Softsmith product is the trademark of software quality. We ensure that the program functions smoothly and is easy to use. To improve our products whenever possible, we are happy to receive comments, criticism, or praise. Please write to us at:

The Software Guild, Inc.
Customer Service
2935 Whipple Road
Union City, CA 94587

Consult your local Softsmith dealer for a catalog of our programs and a demonstration of any of our software products.

II. The Programs

Perception includes seven different programs. The main selection menu (a list of game play options available to you), pictured as follows, appears on the screen after you boot the program. Note that there are four options displayed. The fourth option, "Hand/Eye Coordination" actually consists of four separate games. They appear in a sub-menu when you select this option.



Enter the number of your choice and follow the instructions presented on the screen. Then press the <SPACE BAR>. The following sections of this manual are tutorials for each game. Please refer to the sections on the game you have chosen. When the game ends, you have the choice of playing the game over, trying another game, zeroing the score, or exiting the program and returning to the main selection menu.

LENGTH PERCEPTION

The first program, Length Perception, challenges your ability to compare the lengths of two lines which are presented in various relationships. The lines are displayed in a room and drawn in proper

depth perspective, making the task more difficult in some respects. To use this program, select <1> from the main selection menu. Read the instructions on the screen. Then press the <SPACE BAR>. A sub-menu, listing five different relationships, appears on the screen. Select the one you wish by entering the appropriate number.

Two lines or a line and two flags will be displayed. One line length is controllable by your paddles, while the other is not. Match the controllable line as closely as possible in length to the other line. When you think that you have accurately matched them, hit any key; the computer will display your score. After each game press the <SPACE BAR>. The computer gives you the choice of playing the game over, trying another game, zeroing the scores, or exiting the program. The last option will take you back to the main selection menu.

SHAPE RECOGNITION

During World War II, a test was developed to determine the ability of pilots to discriminate rapidly between friendly and enemy aircraft. The test entailed viewing a series of abstract shapes. What made the task interesting was that each shape was viewed through a moving window, which allowed the pilot to view only a portion of the shape at any given moment.

We have replicated this test on the computer. But we have given you greater control over the level of difficulty than the pilots had.

First, the computer shows you a figure through a "moving window." Once the entire figure has passed through the window, the computer shows you four figures in their entirety (without the use of the window). One of these is an exact duplicate of the test figure. Your goal is to pick out the figure which exactly matches the original test figure.

To enter the Shape Recognition portion of Perception, enter <2> from the main selection menu. Read the on-screen instructions, and then press <SPACE BAR>. A sub-menu will appear which allows you to establish the difficulty of the exercise. First select the number of vertices. This refers to the number of line intersections which will compose the figure (e.g., a four-sided figure has four vertices and a triangle has three). Set this index to any value between 3 and 8.

The next setting is the degree of correspondence. This refers to the degree of similarity between the actual test figure and the four choices shown later. For figures which are very different from the test figure, select <1>; for those which are very much alike, select <8>.

Once you have made these choices, press <0> to start the test. Watch the screen as the window moves downward displaying the figure. Afterwards, when the computer displays the matching figures, select the figure you think was identical to the test figure. To see how well you did, press <SPACE BAR>. The computer then displays your score and gives you a choice of what you want to do next.

SIZE COMPARISON

How well do you think you can compare the size of two figures? Although this sounds like an easy task, you may find it very difficult.

The computer displays geometrically similar figures which are alike in every respect but size. Your task is to compare the size of the master figure (shown on the left side of the screen) with a series of matching test figures (shown on the right).

To enter this program, press <3> from the main selection menu. After you read the on-screen instructions and press the <SPACE BAR>, a sub-menu with difficulty settings for the program will appear. They are as follows:

<1> Size Comparison Scale

The first setting determines whether or not a Comparison Scale will appear on the screen during play. If you want to change this setting, press <1> followed by your choice.

<2> Display Sequence

The next setting determines the order in which the computer presents the figures. You have three choices:

<1> Master and Test Shapes Together—the master figure remains displayed on the screen throughout the presentation of the five matching figures.

<2> Master and Test Shapes Alternate—the screen display alternates between the master figure and the five matching figures.

<3> Master First, Then All Test Shapes—the master shape appears first and then disappears. The five matching figures follow.

<0> Once you have selected the option you wish, press <0> (for okay) to finish the rest of the settings.

<3> Number of Vertices

This refers to the complexity of the master figure (more specifically, the number of sides). Pick any number between 2 and 8.

<4> Display Time

This controls the length of time during which each matching figure is displayed. Select any time from 0.1 to 1.0 seconds.

<0> Okay

When you have set all parameters, press <0> to move into the test program itself. After viewing the display, select the number of the shape which you think corresponds in size to the master figure. The computer will display the results of your choice on the scoreboard. As before, follow the directions on the screen to continue or exit this program.

HAND/EYE COORDINATION PROGRAMS

This set of programs develops and tests your skill in coordinating visual judgements with hand movements. There are four programs available: Star Trace, Falling Line, Visual Pursuit and Tilt Maze. To play any of these, press <4> from the main selection menu. The Hand/Eye Coordination sub-menu will appear. Enter the number of the program you want. Each program is explained below.

<1> Star Trace

Star Trace reproduces a problem often given in introductory psychology classes. Two similar stars are printed on paper, one within the other. Using a mirror to watch your hand, you must draw between the two stars without crossing any lines. Star Trace does the same thing using the paddle controllers. The computer displays two stars, one within the other. Using both paddles, you must control a moving dot between the two figures, without hitting any of the lines.

To enter this program, press <1> from the Hand/Eye Coordination Menu. This will bring up another menu which allows you to set the test parameters for Star Trace. You may set the number of collisions allowed before losing, the number of vertices in the figure, and the width of the path between the interior and exterior figures.

When the figures appear, directions in the upper left-hand side of the screen tell you to set the paddles. Turn the knob on each paddle until the message disappears. Play may begin when both paddles are set. Paddle <0> controls the horizontal movement of the dot, while Paddle <1> controls vertical movement.

Now you're ready to test yourself. The test ends after you have made it all the way around the figure, or you have exceeded the number of collisions permitted. At this point, the computer will prompt you to press <SPACE BAR>. This takes you to the scoreboard to see how well you did. You may then select the game you wish to play next.

<2> Centering a Falling Line

This game is a demanding test of visual judgement and reflexes. It is accessed by pressing <2> from the Hand/Eye Coordination sub-menu. Several control settings available to you in Falling Line automatically appear. You may set the velocity of the falling line, the relative lengths of the two lines, and the distance between the two lines as they appear on the screen. During the program, the computer displays a vertical line on the left side of the screen. On the right, another vertical line begins to fall from the top of the screen to the bottom. Your job is to decide when the centers of the two lines are aligned horizontally.

Hit any key when you think the two lines are properly aligned. Afterwards, the computer displays the actual relationship of the centers. Press <SPACE BAR> to view the scoreboard and select your next program.

<3> Visual Pursuit

In this program you will see a small box and a set of "target" cross hairs on the screen. Your task is to intersect the cross hairs with the box before the box moves. You do this by means of the paddle controllers. The difficulty of the test is determined by the size of the box and the number of tries allowed in each session.

Select <3> from the Hand/Eye Coordination sub-menu and set the test parameters as you did for the other games. As soon as the cross hairs appear on the screen, attempt to move them into the box. This may look easy, but you will find it requires concentration.

After the permitted number of tries, you enter the scoreboard by following the PRESS SPACE BAR TO CONTINUE prompt on the screen. As before, follow the directions on the screen to continue.

<4> Tilt Maze

Tilt Maze reproduces a popular eye/hand game sold in many toy and book stores. The task in the mechanical version is to manipulate a steel ball through a maze on a platform, without letting the ball fall through any of a number of holes. Tilt Maze reproduces this action through a computer simulation, with the paddles controlling the tilt of the platform.

To play Tilt Maze, press <4> from the Hand/Eye Coordination submenu. A parameters menu then appears, which allows you to set the size of the obstacles and the number of errors permitted before you lose the game. When the display appears, note the two indicators on the right-hand side of the screen. These show the position of the maze with respect to both horizontal and vertical axes. Practice a little by moving the paddles and watching how these indicators change. When the ball falls into a "hole" (shown as squares on the screen), a warning bell sounds to inform you. The game ends when you reach the end of the maze or exceed the specified number of errors.

After you finish, follow the prompt by pressing <SPACE BAR> to go to the scoreboard. You have the choice of playing again, changing the settings, or returning to the main selection menu.

III. Troubleshooting

A great deal of effort has gone into preparing this program to operate smoothly and without "bugs." Given normal use, it should provide you with many hours of consistent operation. However, should you have problems with the program, please follow these steps:

1. If the program never starts or dies soon after starting:

- Check the instructions on how to start the program. Try them again, following all steps exactly.
- Check to see that you have the disk in the correct disk drive.
- Make sure that you have all the equipment necessary to run this program, and that it is properly connected. See the front page of this document for a list of necessary equipment.
- Make sure your disk drive is working properly. Try another disk that you know to be good. If it does not start properly, stop the computer immediately and disconnect the drive. Do not use the drive again until it has been checked, or it may damage other disks.

2. If your disk becomes damaged:

- Given normal use, it should not be possible to damage your disk. However, if the disk or program on it does become damaged, please return it to us with a short description of the problem. The Software Guild will replace your disk promptly, according to warranty provisions.

3. If you have other problems:

Please contact our Customer Service Department at the following toll free number. We have the experience and service network to assist you.

1 (800) 341-4000